

Mini Professional Development Lesson



Lesson Topic:
Understanding Assessment Types



Total Time Needed for this Mini Professional Development Lesson: 35-45 minutes

Types of
Assessment Data

- Screening/Benchmark
- Diagnostic
- Progress Monitoring
- Outcome
- Informal



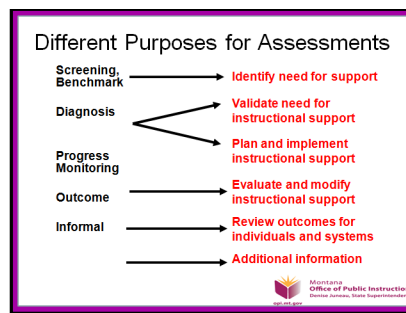
Explain that to begin a process of using data to inform instruction, it is important to collect and prepare a *variety* of data about student learning. We know that no one piece of data tells the entire story. But what does this really mean?

Explain that implementing instructional practices based on the most current instructional research is key to ensure achievement for all learners. Note that along with instruction based on best practices proven through research, a district must have a comprehensive assessment plan in place in order to accurately identify students who may be at risk for failure, as well as identify students' instructional need(s).

Note that comprehensive assessment plans should include five types of assessments, including screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, outcome and informal. Explain that each assessment has a different *purpose* in the plan, which they will have an opportunity to explore further in the next activity.

Media: None

Handout: None



Tell participants that they are now going to have an opportunity to further explore the types of assessments by completing a jigsaw activity.

ACTIVITY: TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS JIGSAW

12-15 minutes

1. Direct participants to the Assessments in the RTI Framework handout.
2. Direct participants to “count off” 1-5, until every person has a number. Then, have participants to assemble in groups of 5, with numbers 1-5 being represented in each group (they shouldn’t have to move around too much to do this.)
3. Assign each person in the jigsaw group the following sections from the handout:
 - 1’s: Screening Assessments
 - 2’s: Progress Monitoring Assessments
 - 3’s: Diagnostic Assessments
 - 4’s: Outcome Assessments
 - 5’s: Informal Assessments
4. Direct participants to individually read their assigned reading, highlighting critical information that they would like to share with their group. Provide about 1 ½ to 2 minutes for this.
5. Then, beginning with 1’s, have participants summarize what they read to their jigsaw group. 2’s, 3’s, 4’s, and 5’s should then continue in the same manner.
6. Once most groups appear finished, direct participants back to their seats.

Review by explaining the purposes for the various assessment types. As you review this information, have participants add any additional notes to their Assessments in the RTI Framework handout.

[click] Screening/Benchmark – Considered the “red flag” assessment. This is a type of assessment that is often administered to ALL students, so is not meant to be lengthy. It is designed as a first step to identify those who may be at high risk for academic failure and in need of additional reading instruction or further diagnosis. Usually given at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

[click] Diagnostic – This assessment is not given to all students - only after other forms of assessment reveal that the student is below the expected benchmark or is not making sufficient progress. The purpose of the diagnostic assessment is twofold. First, it validates need for additional instructional support. Second, it provides more in depth information about students’ skills and instructional needs. This information then helps teachers plan instruction around a student’s specific area of weakness.

[click] Progress monitoring– This assessment determines whether students are making adequate progress and if instruction should be adjusted. Progress monitoring assessments can be curriculum embedded or general. Frequency of assessment is dependent upon the level of the student. As a general rule, the more at-risk the student, the more often the progress monitoring assessment should be administered.

[click] Outcome – This assessment provides a bottom-line evaluation of the effectiveness of the reading program in relation to established performance levels (e.g., end of school year). It is usually administered once at the end of the school year. Many state assessments are considered outcome assessments. NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress), ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills), spring DIBELS/AIMSweb, or state assessments are also examples of an outcome assessment.

continued on the next slide

[click] Informal Assessments –are often the most used type of assessments by educators. Informal assessments provide additional information about student learning to assist educators in meeting the needs of students. Teachers and specialists often use this type of assessment to determine if further diagnostics are indicated in a certain area. An example of an informal assessment might be to have a student read a passage from a science text and then check for understanding. This would help the teachers understand whether this particular student has the requisite knowledge needed in order to learn related higher concepts in science. Another example might be to ask a young student to “find the ‘a’ in the word “apple”, which would help a teacher know if the student can identify “a” in the printed word, which requires the student to understand print awareness.

Make clear that informal assessments are typically not standardized or normed. Thus, they do not meet the technical criteria applied to more formal measures and should not replace formal assessments—screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome.

Explain that is important for all schools—including elementary, middle, and high—to have a comprehensive assessment plan in place.

ACTIVITY: TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

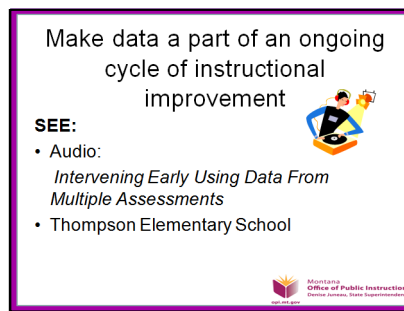
12-15 minutes

1. Direct participants to take out the Types of Assessments handout.
2. Explain that they should work in grade-level teams or department teams for this activity.
3. Ask participants to take a sticky note and make a list of reading assessments they currently use in their school or district.
4. After they have assembled their list, they should identify the type of each assessment they listed (e.g., screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, outcome.) They can write the assessments in the correct categories on the chart provided in the handouts.
5. When they are finished categorizing their list, they should reflect upon the following questions provided in the handout:
 - What types of assessments do you use most in your school or district (i.e. screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, outcome)?
 - Are there any types of assessments that are missing in your school or district comprehensive assessment plan? If so, what type?
 - Are common assessments for ALL grade levels/departments identified for your school or district? In other words, is there consistency among grade levels/departments regarding which assessments will be administered and when?
 - Are assessments in your school used for their intended purpose? How might your school or district better use your identified assessments for their intended purpose?

Explain that once a district or school has an assessment plan in place, the systems that are built around analyzing the data and using the data to inform instruction are critically important. This is the next step.

Media: None

Handouts: Assessments in the RTI Framework; Types of Assessments



Say: We're going to listen to an audio interview of how one school uses multiple types of assessment data within their collaborative teams to provide additional support to students. As you listen, identify the specific assessments this school uses and categorize them by type. You can record this information on the "Additional Notes" column of your Types of Assessments handout.

Listen to the audio.

After listening to the audio, summarize by noting the following:

- Teachers at Thompson Elementary School analyze data from multiple assessments to determine weaknesses and strengths in their students.
- By screening all students, teachers can quickly plan for interventions.
- The teachers create action plans by grade level and for individual students to ensure that achievement gaps are addressed.

Connect to further professional development by telling participants that in the future, they are going to have an opportunity to take an in-depth look to LEARN how to use multiple assessment data within a problem solving cycle to make changes to instruction that affect student achievement.

Media: *Audio interview: Intervening Early Using Data From Multiple Assessments* (3:44 min)

Handout: **Types of Assessments**